

Characters:

Olympio (Buster McAuley, 'Bif') - second generation Irishman with Twainian speech

Chalinus (Cal) - high brow butler

Cleostrata (Gloria, 'the ol' battle axe') - straight talk, no nonsense

Pardalisca (Kitty) -

Myrrhina (Coco Popkins)

Lysidamus (Cleveland Stafford) - monopoly man, new monied lecher

Alcesimus (Collis Popkins) - thrifty,

Chrytio (Chef Louis/Luigi)

SONG: Prologue (1-88) - CAROLYN AND JACKIE

"All I Need is the Girl" (from *Gypsy*)

EMCEE: Pretend we're on stage at the Orpheum,
House lights have just gone down.
You're ready to see your favorite costume, that darling little maid's number.
You can't wait to see your favorite clown
And you're hoping your favorite leading man is back on tonight.
Stage lights come up, and I spot the audience!

This is Stafford's mansion,
Home to father and son,
Wife and lovely ward, foundling gal but much adored.

Now's she's grown and gorgeous, pops and junior are hopeless,
Whole house up in arms over her girlish charms
Skin like milk, legs for days, she's got their hearts all ablaze.

Hello, ladies and gentlemen!

Welcome to Casina, or: Forgiveness, or: A Stratagem Defeated
Performed by the multiply lauded company
Full of seasoned, celebrated stage stars
And a troupe of tomorrow's top troubadours

And here they are, tonight's performers!

(The rest of the cast files out and waves from the sides)

Allow me to introduce, playing Coco Popkins,

The elegant (and salacious) Cici Le Garre!

(Cici comes out and begins striking poses with her fan)

Many of you have seen her grace this stage before

COCO: And if you have seen me,
You'd remember.
See you later, boys!

EMCEE: Playing her husband Collis Popkins,
The famously stonefaced Benjamin Barrow!
And his partner in crimes against comedy, playing Cleveland Stafford
The inimitable Horatio Q. Birdbath!

(they appear)

COLLIS: Well folks, we just came from New York and met the Yankees.

CLEVELAND: So now you know all the players.

COLLIS: I certainly do.

CLEVELAND: Well you know I didn't get to meet the guys. So you'll have to tell me their names, and then I'll know who's playing on the team.

COLLIS: Oh, I'll tell you their names, but you know it seems to me they give these ball players now-a-days very peculiar names.

CLEVELAND: You mean funny names?

COLLIS: Well, let's see, we have on the bags, Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know is on third...

CLEVELAND: That's what I want to find out.

COLLIS: I say Who's on first, What's on second, I Don't Know's on third.

EMCEE: Guys, guys! *(The music stops.)*
There's no way we can do this, it's totally copyrighted. One hundred percent.
(The music continues)
AND NEXT we have the illustrious
The sensational Dame Rosalind Gilroy

Fresh from an (ahem)
 Abruptly ended tour
 With the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Gloria appears holding a skull.

GLORIA: Is this a dagger I see before me?
 That is the question
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.
 Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day.
 Was ever woman in such humor wooed?
 I'll drown my books.
 Give me your hands, if we be friends,
 And Rosalind shall restore amends.

EMCEE: Thank you, Mrs. Gilroy.

GLORIA: DAME!

EMCEE: Dame! Gilroy.
 And playing the household servants Cal and Butler
 Two rising stars,
 In six months they'll be household names
 And you all can say "You saw them when"
 The Alsatian Sensation
 Jean-Michel Von Neuschwannstein
 And Francis "Feather-arms" McGee!

(To some resounding vaudeville music, Cal and Buster perform a typical "skinny strongman" act, in which Cal is miraculously and easily able to carry a massive dumbbell)

EMCEE: Thank you gentlemen,
 And finally, the cast's darling
 Who will tap her way into your hearts
 Ida Truelove!

(Kitty comes out and starts to tap... in her own unique fashion. She is quickly hooked off)

EMCEE: Thank you, everyone!
 And now that you've met our actors,
 Please meet our characters!

(As he speaks – fairly quickly – the actors move about to illustrate what he’s saying)

EMCEE: Gloria and Cleveland Stafford are husband and wife
 Living next door to Collis and Coco Popkins
 They take care of a beautiful young girl Marguerite (*ding*)
 Cleveland and their son Cleveland Junior both fell in “love” with the girl
 So Cleveland sent Junior off on a trip
(to Gloria’s side) Your champion, Gloria wants Marguerite (*ding*)
 To marry the butler Cal, while they wait for Junior to get home.

GLORIA: Friends,
 Let’s show these horrible men
 Who really wears the skirts!

(to Cleveland’s side) But your champion, Cleveland senior wants Marguerite (*ding*)
 To marry the farmer, Buster, so that they can both have a little fun.

CLEVELAND: Gentlemen
 Our wives may take our money, our food, and our dignity
 But they will never take OUR FREEDOM!

EMCEE: That’s enough of that
 Without further ado
 We give you, Casina!

EVERYONE: Got their plans made, got their traps laid,
 All to catch one little girl.
 Got their allies, got their hopes high,
 Got the whip and the bit, they’re mad to mount her
 Both of them dying for one sweet encounter

Too bad for the boy, dad sent him off on a world tour,
 But too bad dad: your wife’s in the know,
 she’ll rein you in despite all your best-laid schemes,
 There’s no way you’re getting that girl!

Act I (89-143)

Scene 1

BUSTER: Now see here, can't a feller even do his business without your constant witnessification? Why are you hounding me, you soft-soled, dandy-toed, lily-livered peacock?!

CAL: Because I have been charged with the task of, as you say, hounding you. I will be as your shadow, following you unto the gallows where they hanged that filthy Irishman, whom you call "pa." Follow you I shall! You do the maths! You shan't have Marguerite as your bride, no matter what impudent skullduggery you contrive!

BUSTER: Git to the 'gotiatoring!

CAL: What did you say? Such cheek! Why are you slinking around Nob Hill, you potato-sacked illiterate?

BUSTER: A man heeds his own inclinations!

CAL: Why aren't you on the Farm? Why don't you stick to your own...turf? Keep to your nags, sir! Tend to your enchanted broccoli garden! Abstain from cosmopolitan concerns! Keep your meat-mitts off my filly! High thee home and hang...my good man.

BUSTER: I ain't forgot my officiations! Ol' Zeke's tending things. If I get, what'n I came here for, namely, to wed that fancy gal what's got your longjohns all in a twist: Marguerite--ankles like fine China, cheeks like Californie poppy--I aim to trot her down the El Camino way and you'll never see us again!

CAL: You? Her?! I'd sooner drown myself in the Bay!

BUSTER: She's my gold nugget! So start fillin' yer pockets with rocks!

CAL: Your gold nugget? The only nuggets you handle come from a pony's posterior!

BUSTER: You'll see how these 'ventualities'll turn out!

CAL: Poppycock!

BUSTER: Our nuptials will set you twisting: there'll be excruciations seven ways to Sunday!

CAL: What do you intend?

BUSTER: What do I intend? Firstwise, your brand will be swingin' cold, while I poke that filly my red-hot iron. Then I'll have the bossman set you under me. I'll make your hat a pail for hogslop, your jacket a mop for the stalls, your shiny shoes a shovel for shit. And whatever you don't shovel I'll shove up your ass. I'll bend you over my finest horse's posterior and use you like a saddle. And afterward, on the Farm, if you think you'll be dining with us at Arbuckle's chuckwagon, think again. Your vittles'll more'n likely come from the horse you groom. And then, after you're tuckered out and fixin' to hit the Munger hay, you'll find yourself recumbating with the turkey buzzards down Escondido way.

CAL: Is that so, pray tell?

BUSTER: You bet your britches! When you pass the eucalyptus groves, your ears'll burn and you'll hear her cry: "oh my darling, oh my honeybee, oh my Fourth of July, show me your Roman candle! Let me give blinky a big wet kiss. Sow your wild oats, fill my feedbag! Make me go ooh la la, mon cheri (*mispronounce French horribly*)! Oh, my hummingbird! My horny toad! Oh, my jackalope!" Oh, she'll yowl like a coyote-bitch in heat! And you, you hang-dog, you'll be lying awake, scratchin' in your bedroll, gnawin on your own bone! Now, lest you offer your typical remonstrations, it's nigh-time to redirect my personage intowards. I'll countenance none of your Nob Hill lip-gammin'!

He goes inside, and Cal, following him, calls out:

CAL: Lip-gamming?! I'll plug up your toothless-talk with my, with my...!!!

They are both gone.

Act II (144-216)

Scene 2

EMCEE: Ladies and gentlemen, the Women of Nob Hill!

Gloria and Kitty enter.

SONG 2:

"He Had it Coming" (from *Chicago*)

GLORIA and KITTY:

Big! Fat! Fool! Greedy! Gluttonous! Stafford!

Big! Fat! Fool! Greedy! Gluttonous! Stafford!

He's got it coming, He's got coming,
I'm going to starve that bastard out,

I'll have him hungry, I'll have him begging,
He'll feel my fury, that filthy lout.

Big! Fat! Fool! Greedy! Gluttonous! Stafford!

GLORIA: Lock it up, girls, and look out, because he'll try the backdoor, too! I want this pantry sealed up tight. The breadbox shall be closed to all comers, and I don't want him dipping in the honeypot while I'm away!

KITTY: But the mister has a mighty big appetite on this day of days.

GLORIA: Tut tut! I'm not putting out any lunch for my husband, scoundrel that he is, as long as he's trying to stick his thumb in the pie reserved for Junior. Oh, he won't lay a single finger on the slightest morsel. With vinegar words to match his base actions, I'll deliver him quite the tongue-lashing. I'll have a maid dust off the old riding crop and give him a fierce blow, leaving him blue. Oh, I've been prattling on too long, airing the laundry like Kitty. I'm going to visit the Popkins', you might say I'm going to pop in to the Popkins'. On the off-chance that my husband wants me, he can come over and get me himself.

Coco enters.

COCO: Come on, gals. Hell-o-oooo, is anyone listening to me? Is anyone even looking at me? Don't all go Helen Keller at once now! I'll be over here if anyone's looking for me, you know, the thing you do with your eyes!

GLORIA Oh, hello, Coco.

COCO: What's eating you?

GLORIA: Nobody! That's the problem, I'd rather have Rob Ford as a husband, at least he dines in.

COCO: Oh dearie, tell me what's the matter.

GLORIA: Our domestic life is not particularly Elysian.

COCO: Oh I'm sure the doctor can get you something for that.

GLORIA: My husband has offended my honor and I demand satisfaction.

COCO: That's rich, shouldn't it be the man that wants satisfaction?

GLORIA: Oh, he does, just not from me. It's my new maid. That's why he's try to marry her off to his handyman, Buster, so she can be his handy woman.

COCO: Aw, honey, that's not a problem! A good marriage is built on sharing. And come on, we all know men are dogs, let him scratch his fleas, so long as he keeps you in the minks!

GLORIA: Well, I never! The temerity, how vulgar, how intemperate, how Californian!

COCO: If you want him to be hard for you, you shouldn't be hard on him!

GLORIA and KITTY:

Big! Fat! Fool! Greedy! Gluttonous! Stafford!

GLORIA:

He disrespects me, and he rejects me,
And he's out to bang the ward.

COCO:

But if you mock him, if you cock-block him,
You'll only end up the more ignored.

GLORIA and KITTY:

A filthy lout, lout, lout, lout, lout!
A filthy lout, lout, lout, lout, lout!

He's got it coming, He's got coming,
I'm gonna stop him in his tracks
His coals are stoking, his stack is smoking,
But it's the end of your line, you cad.

GLORIA: My husband's coming for me!

COCO: See! Things are already looking up!

GLORIA: Quiet, you!

COCO: Forsooth, I'll vanish myself! Towards home I walk my feet!

Scene 3

(217-228)

EMCEE: Ladies and Gentlemen, we invite you to hear
The greatest love song ever written.

Cleveland Stafford composes a song for his love, Marguerite... poorly.

CLEVELAND: Love I believe all things exceeds-
Even gold with its gleam and shine with its sheen.
And it's not possible anything to recall
With the same kind of zing or the same bada-bing.

I am so flabbergasted that cooks who use spices
neglect this spice that, alone...suffices

A melange of amour is a hit with the masses!
it turns brrrrine into wine and grrrrrrime to molasses!

I know this myself—no hearsay about it.
For I love Marguerite, look at me, can you doubt it!
My shine is the... (*thinking*) shine of a nugget of gold,
And I'm drenched head to toe in the finest cologne!

With splendidest ointment, myself I anoint!
And she likes it too, even more to the point (*winks*).

But the wife has me tied to the tracks! Alas!
There she stands, the ole battle axe!

I'll try to meet her vinegar with honey.

Gloria enters.

CLEVELAND: My honey dearest, light of my life!

GLORIA: Don't touch me.

CLEVELAND: Come on, Ophelia, don't be so cold to your Romeo! (Grabs her) Whither goest thee?

GLORIA: Hands off!

CLEVELAND - Tarry but a while!

GLORIA: I'm not 'tarrying'.

CLEVELAND - I'll follow thee.

GLORIA: Are you crazy?

CLEVELAND - Crazy? Crazy in love.

GLORIA: won't give in to you

CLEVELAND - Don't leave me this way. (*sings*)

GLORIA: You're killing me.

CLEVELAND- (*aside*) Goddamn wish I could!

GLORIA: (*overhearing him*) *That* I believe.

CLEVELAND- Oh come on, my little cardinal, look at me.

GLORIA: (*turning around with sarcasm*) Sure thing, my little woodpecker. (*pause*) What's that smell? Is that perfume?

CLEVELAND (*aside, trying to wipe off cologne*): End of the line! Damn that Old Spicemonger! He told me it was Royal Musk.

GLORIA: You dirty old wasp, if I weren't a lady, I'd railroad you proper! Are you taking lessons from the Man-Your-Man-Could-Smell-Like?

CLEVELAND - Hey I was just in the room when my friend was spraying all over the place.

GLORIA:(*aside*) He's quick off the mark. (*to CLEVELAND*) Do you ever feel guilty about anything?

CLEVELAND - Whatever you say!

GLORIA:What opium den have you been haunting, hop-head?

CLEVELAND - Me? A Stafford in an opium den? Darling.

GLORIA: I know more than you think.

CLEVELAND - What?! What do you know?

GLORIA: Of all the hopped up, nouveaux riches, fool old men, you're the worst, you bloody Berlusconi! What bunga bunga party were you at? How many shots of absinthe? God you're drunk. Look at the state of your tails!

CLEVELAND- God strike me down if I've set foot in a saloon today

GLORIA: Whatever. Drink, eat, whore, whatever, you'll just be taking money out of Cleveland Jr's pockets.

CLEVELAND- Woman, are you hysterical? Is your womb on the wander? If you use up your insults right now, we'll just be one of those couples who don't talk to each other at dinner tonight. Calm down and do what I say.

GLORIA: Do what you say about what?

CLEVELAND - About Marguerite, of course. It's time we made our ward a wife. She belongs with Buster; he'll give her everything she needs: food, warmth, wood a'plenty, showers golden and otherwise -- EVERYTHING. Why should we give her to your fancy pants butler with the hatstand up his ass. Every dime he gets he spends on waistcoats and cravats, and we all know Cal wasn't well endowed to start with.

GLORIA: Are you so senile that you can't remember a single damn thing about your job?

CLEVELAND - What's that?

GLORIA: If you hadn't lost all your marbles in an opium haze you'd remember that the ward's marriage is MY job.

CLEVELAND - Why do you want to give her to that upstart butler?

GLORIA: That upstart butler belongs to our only son, and when Jr. gets back, Marguerite can service them both.

CLEVELAND - I'm his only dad, and old men need more maintenance!

GLORIA: My dear sir, you're really kicking the hornets' nest now.

CLEVELAND: (*aside*) I think she's on to me. (*to Gloria*) Me?

GLORIA: Yes, you! Why do you care so much? What's in it for you?

CLEVELAND: She BELONGS with a decent, hard-working servant, not that good-for-nothing.

GLORIA: What about if I talk Buster into it? Would you be OK with that?

CLEVELAND: What about if I talk the butler into giving her up? Leave it to me, toots.

GLORIA: Fine. Let's get them out here and see -- I'll get Cal, you get that Buster of yours.

CLEVELAND: Sure.

GLORIA: He'll be here in a New York minute. We'll see who will win.

Exit Gloria

CLEVELAND: Oh titans of industry, tie her to the tracks! It's not my fault I'm head over heels in love, and all she wants to do is fuck with me and make my life a trainwreck. She's on to me now. This is all part of her conniving, her webs of lies... that damn shrew! She's backing that bastard butler!

Enter Cal

CLEVELAND: (*half aside*) Oh Carnegie and Mellon, Rockefeller and Vanderbilt, smite him with a cable car!

CAL: (*irritated and sarcastic*) You were calling for me, Sir?

CLEVELAND: Yes I was.

CAL: (*sarcastic*) And what ever can I do for you, Monsieur?

CLEVELAND: First, drop that tone. I'm the one who pays your wage. (*pauses*) I've always liked you, Cal, you do well enough.

CAL: (*ironic*) Is that so? If you like me so much, why don't you give me some shares of Stafford Rail?

CLEVELAND: I'd LIKE to. But I can't if you're not going to help me out now.

CAL: Indeed, how can I help?

CLEVELAND: Here's the skinny: I promised Buster he could marry Marguerite.

CAL: Oh what a pity! But ma'am has betrothed her to me. What a quandary... for you!

CLEVELAND: Hold your fillies! Would you rather be a free-swinging Stafford stockholder or just

a servant tied to the old ball and chain? Do you want to iron shirts forever? This is my final offer. Take it or leave it.

CAL: Right now you keep me in cravats -- if I were a stockholder, I'd have to buy them myself. I won't give up Marguerite.

CLEVELAND: (*angrily*) Go and get my wife right now, and we'll figure this out once and for all.

CAL: As you wish.

CLEVELAND: You may rule the roost today, but I am going to block your cock. If I can't talk you into it, at least we'll let fate decide. Get ready to throw them bones.

CAL: The die shall be cast, sir -- I will give my little pearl her namesake necklace on our wedding night.

CLEVELAND: Get out of my sight.

CAL: You may not like it, but you are going to see me again.

Exit Cal

CLEVELAND: I'm as low as a coal shoveller. Look at this: if my wife has talked Buster out of marrying Marguerite, I'm bugged. I'll throw myself under a stallion. If not, there's still some hope. Good, Buster's on his way.

BUSTER: (*in the house*) You'd sooner make a stew outa me than I'd give you what you want.

CLEVELAND: (*aside*) Boy am I glad to hear that. He's on my side.

BUSTER: (*in the house*) I only have one mistress and that's Our Lady. Go ahead and fire me! You know a mick in this town can get another job easily without your say-so.

CLEVELAND: What's going on Buster? Who are you arguing with?

BUSTER: Who d'ya think?

CLEVELAND: Ahah, my wife, the battleaxe.

BUSTER: Oh you have a wife do you? You're like a quarterback: day and night you're playing the field.

CLEVELAND: What's she planning? What did she say to you?

BUSTER: She's on her knees

CLEVELAND: What!?

BUSTER: Trying to get me to abandon Marguerite

CLEVELAND: So what did you say?

BUSTER: Boss, I wouldn't give her to the Pope himself.

CLEVELAND: Bonds and blessings upon you, my son!

BUSTER: Now she's so angry she's foaming at the mouth.

CLEVELAND: That's the only part of her that's been wet for years.

BUSTER: That might be your own derelictin'. Your philanderiness is getting on my nerves. Your wife hates me, your son hates me, everyone hates me

CLEVELAND: So what? As long as this Lord of the Rails is on your side, you don't need those Catholic idols of yours.

BUSTER: Horse. Shit. Even that Rocker Feller is gonna die some day. And when you do, I'm going to need those saints on my side.

CLEVELAND: If I get to ride the Marguerite, we can both take her downtown.

BUSTER: I don't think so -- you know how your wife shuts down service on game days.

CLEVELAND: Here's what we're gonna do. You and Cal will gamble for Marguerite. If that doesn't work, we need to whip out the big guns.

BUSTER: What if we lose? I don't wanna crap out.

CLEVELAND: Trust in your potato gods. One of them's got to be the patron saint of my passion.

BUSTER: Claptrap! There's not a saint in heaven lookin' down on you.

CLEVELAND: Put a sock in it. I see Cal coming out now. Let's get ready to rumble.

Enter Gloria and Cal

GLORIA: Cal, what does my husband Cleveland want?

CAL: He wants put you out to pasture.

GLORIA: Yes, I think that's the plan.

CAL: I don't just think it, I KNOW it. (*Wink*)

CLEVELAND: Everyone's an expert. Alright, let's see who's got the bigger balls - let's go head to head. (*to wife and Cal*) Are you ready?

CAL: We've got everything we need: you two, your lovely wife and yours truly.

BUSTER: I could do without one of those things.

CLEVELAND: So could I.

CAL and GLORIA: You only think you could.

CAL: But I'm gonna be your cattle prod, my little alfalfa desperado. I'm going to prod you, I'm going to poke you, I'm going to give you a shock you won't forget. You're already afraid you're going to like you, aren't you?

CLEVELAND: Quiet you.

CAL: Someone reign this bruiser in.

BUSTER: (*to Cleveland*) No, reign HIM in-- he loves a bit between his teeth.

CLEVELAND: Enough of this. (*to Gloria*). Hunny, I thought I could make you marry Marguerite to me. I still think so.

GLORIA: To you?!

CLEVELAND: To me! To me? Whoopsie-daisy! Obviously, I meant "to him". My tongue's been slipping all over the place these days. The old noggin' isn't up to scratch.

GLORIA: Nothing about you's been up lately.

CLEVELAND: To him. To him! That's it, I'm on the right track now.

GLORIA: Ha! You're as crooked as a Virginia fence.

CLEVELAND: I just want her so bad...for Buster! We're begging you!

GLORIA: What do you mean?

CLEVELAND: Do Buster here a favor in this Marguerite matter.

GLORIA: I wouldn't dream of it!

SONG 4:

"Luck Be a Lady" (from *Guys & Dolls*)

(Under the song, the four of them do a dumbshow of a rock-paper-scissors game)

EMCEE:

My fellow citizens,
Of foggy San Fran-cis
I here propose a fair and accurate way to settle this
You both will throw a hand,
And when the die is cast,
We'll know which one of you will marry our Margurite at last.

Luck be lady today
Luck be lady today
Luck if you've been a lady to begin with
Luck be a lady today

Luck let a gentleman see
Just how nice a dame you can be
I know the way you've treated other guys you've been with
Luck be a lady
Luck by a lady
Luck be a lady, today!

BUSTER: I win! I win!

CAL: You damn illiterate, superstitious bog-trotter

GLORIA: What a surprise, Cal lost again!

CLEVELAND: Yes! Your holy virgin is with us, Buster.

BUSTER: Oh, she was and is. It's a victory for us pious country folk! I feel like singin' a Pindalic

pepinician.

CLEVELAND: You'd better prepare the wedding, my dear Gloria.

GLORIA: As you say.

CLEVELAND: You know she's going all the way down on the Peninsula, right to my Farm, far, far away from here?

GLORIA: I know.

CLEVELAND: Go inside and get the wedding ready, even if you don't like it.

GLORIA: Fine.

CLEVELAND: *(to Buster)* Let's going inside too: labor to supervise, cake to taste.

BUSTER: Lead on boss!

Scene 4

CAL: If I hang myself, it's all for naught. I'll have to spend my *own* money on a new rope, just to give those bastards a happy ending. What's the point? It's the California collar for me. I'm done for, Marguerite's marrying that knuckle-dragger. It's not so bad that the mick has got the chick but I'm sure I've been clobbered by that robber. The old letch has busted his balls to ensure that I'll never ride Marguerite while bumpkin boy is first in the queue to tag on.

The boss, how he shimmied and shivered and shook! When that yokel, Buster, won, how he pranced and danced and twirled like a SCIT chorus-girl. Whoa! I'll slink back, I hear the doors opening – my entourage is here! Watch me derail these railroaders.

Buster and Cleveland enter planning the wedding.

BUSTER: Let him come to the farm, I'll send him back with a spike in him, just like a railwayman.

CLEVELAND: That'll do it.

BUSTER: It's done and dusted.

CLEVELAND: Bah, if Cal were here, I'd send him to the market, he'd empty his pockets on two bottles of artisanal Kombucha.

CAL: I'll creep in the corner and crouch like a crab. I have to hear what my tormentors are saying, the first of them screws me, the other one chews me. Just look at this crook, this bog-dwelling, potato stealer, dressed up in his tux and heading for the aisle. I'll hang myself later. Butler's honour, I'll send this fucker back up the railways to Reno before I'm done.

BUSTER: I've proved myself plenty submissive! You're knee-deep in coozy and all thanks to me. Tonight you'll pluck your pearl and Gloria will never know. The world's your oester.

CLEVELAND: Pipe down! Prop 8 be damned, I'm giving you a smooch-o-thanks, my little sweetie-pie.

CAL: What the blazes! Kiss him? What's this sweetie-pie? By the almighty dollar, I think the boss wants to break new ground with his golden spike.

BUSTER: What? You're in love with me now?

CLEVELAND: Yes by Rockefeller, more than I love myself. Can I hold you?

CAL: I say! Hold him?

BUSTER: Errr.... ok.

CLEVELAND: Now I'm holding you, I feel I'm licking honey.

BUSTER: Listen here, lover boy. Dismount from my derri-rear.

CAL: This, this is why the boss made him the bailiff! And the same thing happened to me a while back, when I was driving him home from the country club dinner, he offered the job to me too.

BUSTER: I've been so flexible for you today, just the way you like it!

CLEVELAND: It's true, as long as I live, I'll always take care of you.

CAL: By my silk sneezer, they'll be rolling in the hay by the end of today. That old leech has a thing for beards.

CLEVELAND: Tonight's the night for snugglin' and smugglin'. I'll sneak some goods past the fat controller.

CAL: Brush and boot-black! Now I'm on the right track. He *is* hot for Marguerite. Hoisted on his own petard.

CLEVELAND: God damn, I want to touch her, kiss her...

BUSTER: I won't stand for no primo noctes: I'm the jockey what's goin' tame that filly. What's yer rush?

CLEVELAND: But I love her.

BUSTER: I don't think yer have the physical apparations to conduct that there busyness today.

CLEVELAND: I do. And in exchange, you'll rise a notch or two on my Hoover Tower!

CAL: I'm going to need to prick my ears up, catch these two porkers in the sack.

CLEVELAND: My friend, Collis Popkins, will let me use his house halfway down the hill as a Hyde-away. It's right in the Tender-Nob, a real sweet spot.

BUSTER: And Mrs. Popkins?

CLEVELAND: I smoothed this over. My wife will invite her to the wedding and she'll spend the night at our house. I'll see that her husband's elsewhere. You bring your wife to 'the farm' (*scare quotes, Buster looks confused*) – but not really, you bring her to Popkins'. – I'll schtup her all night and then you'll saddle up and take her down to the farm, before dawn. How's that for a plan?

BUSTER: Too smart for me, I never know what you railroad magnets are yappin' about.

CAL: Carry on with your schemes; you'll land yourselves in trouble for this.

CLEVELAND: Alright, what do you do next?

BUSTER: Yes, sir!... No, sir! Some explanerations would be benefactual.

CLEVELAND: Take my money-bag and run and buy the wedding banquet. I want a nice finger buffet: little appetisers to pop in one's mouth, treats and sweet-meats for my sweet.

BUSTER: Err ok.

CLEVELAND: Buy crudités...

CAL: It's crude, I'd say!

CLEVELAND: ...crabs...

CAL: If you're smart, you won't get crabs.

CLEVELAND: ... sole.

CAL: But I'd rather you bought swordfish. So I could stab you in the eye, you filthy old man.

BUSTER: Do you want any tongue?

CLEVELAND: What's the point, when there's a wife back home. There's enough tongue on her, she never shuts up.

BUSTER & CLEVELAND: Hahahaha. Women do talk a lot.

CLEVELAND: Alright, scoot. Oh and no cheap oysters, I don't want to shit the bed. I still need to arrange things with Popkins so that he can take care of business.

BUSTER: So er who's buying the groceries?

CLEVELAND: You! I've told you already. Scram!

Exit Cleveland and Buster

CAL: All the stock in the west couldn't keep me quiet on this one. This is insider trading, it's clear as day! But I have a cunning plan and if ma'am plays her part, we'll come out on top. I'll run rings round these railroaders, I'll vanquish the victors. Cleveland will get his just desserts. Spotted dick's on the menu tonight! ...ugh.

Act III

Scene 5

CLEVELAND: Now I'll know if your capitalist spirit is still with you Collis. The engagement is engaged, the signifier signified! Don't ask me why I'm in love, save that question up for a rainy day. As for 'old geezer', 'grey-beard', 'more salt than pepper' - enough of those, put them away! 'But what about your wife?' That's the worst of all!

COLLIS: You're the most lovesick man I've ever seen.

CLEVELAND: Is the house empty?

COLLIS: It's as empty as a cashed-out claim; I sent my butler and all the servants over to your

house an hour ago.

CLEVELAND: You're so cleverly clever. And, Collis, we are going to have a feast tonight! I sent Buster out for all the sweetest meats...but remember, it's a pot luck. And definitely BYOB.

COLLIS: Sure thing, toodle-oo.

CLEVELAND: Oh, and make sure you bring every last scrap from your pantry. And that suckling pig

COLLIS: What are you talking about?

CLEVELAND: 'Cos I need your house empty and Marguerite's getting stuffed!

COLLIS: Oh woe is me! All you're full of groaners.

CLEVELAND: What's the benefit of being in love if I can't crack bons mots and tap some hoes? Just make sure you keep up your end of the deal.

Cleveland exits. Gloria has been watching from the other end of the stage.

GLORIA: So that's why my husband wanted me to hurry up and invite Collis' wife over here – he's going to use their empty house as his little lovenest. I certainly won't invite her now, and I'll make sure those horny old goats won't even have a stable corner for their rutting. But look here! Here comes the pillar of City Hall himself, the steward of the people of California, my dear friend and neighbour -- who's so kindly giving my husband his home as flophouse. Why he's not even worth the price of a two-bit Tenderloin dinner.

COLLIS: Coco's been waiting inside for ages, now. I'm amazed that Gloria still hasn't asked her next door. Cleveland said...But look! There she is now. Finally! Hello, Gloria.

GLORIA: Howdy Collis, how's your wife?

COLLIS: Very excited to see you. That kind and considerate husband of yours let us know that you might need some help with this wedding, so she cleared her schedule for the whole afternoon. I'll go inside and get her now.

GLORIA: Oh no no no. It's fine, I don't want to disturb her.

COLLIS: But she's as free as a bird.

GLORIA: I don't want to be a pest.

COLLIS: But you are preparing for the wedding, right?

GLORIA: Oh, I've been hustling and bustling all day.

COLLIS: So, surely need another lady's helping hand...

GLORIA: Oh, I have plenty of help already!

COLLIS: Okay, but surely you'll need help afterwards; weddings involving the...lower classes often require a great deal of cleanup. Or so I've heard.

GLORIA: Oh, thanks to your butler, and all those servant that you were sooo kind enough lend me earlier, I think we'll be just fine. Once the wedding's done, though, I'll be sure to call on her. Bye now, and please give her my best!

COLLIS: What shall I do now? Alas! That horndog Cleveland has set me up for a right tongue-lashing from Coco. I asked her to clear her schedule...promised her services as though she were a damned plate-licker--and for the wedding of a ward and a stablehand! That swindler Stafford assured me that Gloria would ask for assistance. And now the old ball and chain says she doesn't need any help.

If I didn't know any better, I'd say that Gloria's cottoning on to the old bear's scheming. On the other hand, though...if she *were* in the know, she'd be raising more hell than drunken 'niner on a Saturday morn. Well, looks as though I've got my own problems in either case. Back inside I go, got to settle the old steamship back in her berth. (*exit*)

GLORIA: This is a marvellous mockery. Those pillars of industry are starting to crumble now! How I wish that good-for-nothing, decrepit husband of mine would show up so that I could sport with him too. I'll set them against each other like two velocipedists racing on their high-wheel penny-farthings. And they'll go head-over-handlebars twice as quick. But here he comes. Look at that hang-dog face -- you'd almost think him honest.

Cleveland returns.

CLEVELAND: A lover-boy's gotta be totally off his chump to go to City Hall when he's practically got his hand on his lady's shimmy. God almighty, I'm a horse's ass. I wasted all of today witnessing for my cousin Rockford. That lummoX bought a majority stake in a damn quartz quarry, and now there's an ownership dispute. I can't figure what the fuss's all about -- what are they going to do with all that silicone in this valley? Thank god he lost, so I won't have to go back tomorrow. Good thing too, as I intend on diving for my little pearl all night, and I'll still be dripping with sea-brine come sun-up.

Haw! Shuck my shells! The wife's in front of the house, she ain't gonna be happy as a clam if she heard any of that.

GLORIA: (*Aside*) Oh, I heard it all, you little leech. And it will cost you...but first I'll fluff you up a little with my honey tongue.

CLEVELAND: [*Aside*] I ain't scared. I'll go closer and see if I can butter up that lobster tail. [*To Gloria*] Oh my dearest, how are you?

GLORIA: I have been waiting for you all day, growing weary as Helios holds up his light and ere is nigh to closing upon the great sky.

CLEVELAND: My sweetest Jezebel, have all provisions been made? Have you already brought the lady who lives yonder to our abode to assist you?

GLORIA: My darling I am so terribly sorry to have cursed so rudely to you earlier. I seem to have lost my grace in my fluster. Please allow me to speak in more dulcet tones. I sent one of our servant boys over to invite her but then the effort and exertion of such invitational labor made me tired and I just had to be reposed for an hour so as not to upset my delicate temperament. After reposing such for an hour and when my vital energy had nearly returned I was appalled almost to tears by the arrival of a letter by the pony express. After another half of hour of repositude I mustered the strength to read this glorious epistle written in so flowing and unique a hand that my eyes grew weary and I laid myself down once more because of the strain.

In sum the letter said as follows: "Ahem, My dear illustrious madam, This unfortunate letter writes to you to inform you that my wife, who is and has been invited by you, the most distinguished letter reader, has perturbed my sensibilities of late and shan't be capable of..." At this point I grew weary and did nothing again for half an hour. Alas! How this Western climate so upsets my aspiring and respiring spirit. I must rest from speech now but I will tell you this final word - she is not coming!

CLEVELAND: My darling of the Western palms, though your hair smells sweet and ambrosial and your arms are both proportional to your waist but also succulent in their nature there is but one quality that you lack which betrays your pedigree as a shopkeeper's daughter and a graduate of the lowly Albany Academy for girls: you aren't charming enough.

GLORIA: Alas and such! My dearest and most honored husband, allow me briefly to inform you of the matrimonial duties of the fairer sex. It is not the job of virtuous wives, chastened by the holy spirit, to charm other men; rather, this is the task of harlots, strumpets, and suffragettes. If you want Coco here, you ought to speak to Collis yourself. I shall prepare in doors whatever that needs attending to, my dear spouse.

CLEVELAND: Then please do make haste.

GLORIA: Oh, I shall! And 'tis sweet sorrow to part with you, my love. (*Aside*). He's taken the bit now, and I'm going to ride him harder than one of Catherine the Great's stallions. Lover-boy's in for a most arduous time.

Gloria goes in.

COLLIS: I am stopping in to see whether this lothario of ours has returned from Market Street. That drugstore cowboy has humiliated my wife and made me look like a bufoon. But look. There he is now, in front of the mansion! I was just on my way to see you, this very moment.

CLEVELAND: And I to you, good sir. Explain yourself, you rusty horse's shoe. What did I entrust you with? What did I ask you for?

COLLIS: Whatever do you mean?

CLEVELAND: You were supposed to empty your abode for me and my gal, and you were supposed to bring your wife over here to my house. I got a vigorous case of the blue balls here, and now I'll get no relief!

COLLIS: Oh, put a spike in it! You claimed that your wife would send for mine. However, she never did.

CLEVELAND: Fimble famble! She says that she did send for her but that you wouldn't let her go.

COLLIS: I ain't no fimbler-fambler. Gloria told me herself that she didn't need any assistance

CLEVELAND: But Gloria told me to come over and get Coco.

COLLIS: But I no longer have a shred of care for your fornication needs.

CLEVELAND: But my blue balls!

COLLIS: But my ass. I'm going...

CLEVELAND: But her ass!

COLLIS: Stop butting in!

CLEVELAND: No! I'll butter up my Marguerite today. Even if you go to the butcher for a pound of ham and three huge rump steaks, you won't get more butt than me today!

COLLIS: Button up, or your butt gets a taste of my boot.

CLEVELAND: Okay, bud. Are you going to send the wife over to me?

COLLIS: To hell with my wife, with your wife, and your new piece of caboose. [Calming down]
Alright alright, go play with your trainset; I'll send the wife over to your place right away.

CLEVELAND: That's more like it, you ole plate of soup.

Exit Collis Popkins

CLEVELAND: Why is this happening? I shouldn't have belched at that séance last month or scoffed at the apparition of that weird, naked indian. This is so embarrassing. My boiler's gonna blow! [*Hear noises from house*] By the invisible hand of Adam Smith, what is it now?

Enter Kitty

KITTY: O I am nothing! Nothing! Dead, dead, dead!
My heart's stopped, my limbs shake.
Help me! Save me! Hide me!
I've seen such strange scenes—
stuff you've never heard of.
Watch out, Madam Gloria, leave her, I beg you!
Don't let her do something bad in her rage.
Take the sword from that girl—
she's stark raving mad!

CLEVELAND: Why's she rushed out here, scared out of her wits? Kitty!

KITTY: O, horrible, horrible, most horrible.

CLEVELAND: Look at me.

KITTY: M'lord?

CLEVELAND: What's with you?

KITTY: Here's rue for remembrance. Pray, love, remember.

CLEVELAND: What? Remember what?

KITTY: A document in madness!

CLEVELAND: What do you mean?!

KITTY: O weraday!

CLEVELAND: Weraday yourself!

KITTY: Such things as I have seen!

CLEVELAND: Whatever it is, say it. Say it fast.

KITTY: Lights, lights, away, away!

CLEVELAND: Do I really want to know? I need a drink.

KITTY: Closer, love!

CLEVELAND: Go to hell! Goddam you, top to toe.
If you don't tell me what's wrong fast,
I'll tan your hide, you viper.

KITTY: M'lord!

CLEVELAND: What do you want from me, girl?

KITTY: You're *too* cruel. (*pouts.*)

CLEVELAND: Count on it.
Whatever it is, tell me in brief.
What happened in there?

KITTY: Oh, you'll know soon enough.
That girl of yours was starting to do
some *terrible* thing, just the worst—
not ladylike at all!

CLEVELAND: What is it?

KITTY: Fear keeps tripping up my tongue!

CLEVELAND: Are you going to talk, or not?

KITTY: I'll talk! Your ward, the one you're marrying off
to your ranchhand, she's inside—

CLEVELAND: Doing what?

KITTY: She's no lady, that's for sure.
She's threatening her fiance. His life --

CLEVELAND: What?

KITTY: Alack and alas!

CLEVELAND: What is it?

KITTY: His life is forfeit if they wed, she says (*He takes another swig of whiskey*) The Winchester—

CLEVELAND: (*Spit take*) What?

KITTY: The Winchester—

CLEVELAND: WHAT ABOUT THE WINCHESTER?

KITTY: She's got it.

CLEVELAND: Damn it! How'd she get that gun?

KITTY: She's chasing everyone all over the house.
No one can get near her—
they're all lying low under tables and chairs.

CLEVELAND: Horrible, horrible, most horrible! What's wrong with her?

KITTY: A document in madness!.

CLEVELAND: Son of a—(*exude mute blasphemy from every pore*)

KITTY: If you'd heard what she said today—

CLEVELAND: What did she say?

KITTY: I heard it myself.
She swore up one side and down the other
she'd shoot whoever tumbles her tonight.

CLEVELAND: She'd shoot *me*?

KITTY: Who said anything about *you*?

CLEVELAND: Pardon me, I meant the ranchhand.

KITTY: I think we've slipped in the rough.

CLEVELAND: Has she threatened me?

KITTY: Oh, she's madder at you than all the rest.

CLEVELAND: What for?

KITTY: You're handing her off to Buster!
None of you will live to see the dawn, she says.
I'm here to warn you to be on your guard!

CLEVELAND: God, this *is* horrible. Horrible, most horrible.

KITTY: [*aside*] You bet.

CLEVELAND: [*aside*] I'm the saddest *senex amans* on the whole damn comic stage. (*Takes another swig*)

KITTY: [*aside*] I've pulled the wool over his eyes—
it's all a heap of lies. Don't worry -- she's only mad north-northwest. When the wind is southerly,
our Marguerite knows a hawk from a handsaw.
Boss lady and the butler planned the whole thing,
and I was sent to trick him.

CLEVELAND: Um, Kitty?

KITTY: What is it?

CLEVELAND: Just...

KITTY: What?

CLEVELAND: There's something I want to ask you.

KITTY: You're holding me up

CLEVELAND: You're driving me mad!

Does Casina still have that gun?

KITTY: Oh, yes—two, actually.

CLEVELAND: TWO?

KITTY: One for you, one for Buster. (*brandishes two imaginary rifles*)

CLEVELAND: I'm the deadest man alive.

Should I run?

What about my wife?

Why hasn't she taken the guns?

KITTY: No one dares get near Marguerite, your wife included.

CLEVELAND: Has she tried talking?

KITTY: She's talked.

Marguerite won't put them down

unless the wedding is called off.

CLEVELAND: Will she, nill she, she *shall* be wed today!

Why shouldn't I finish what I've started, and

marry her to me? Pardon me,

"to the ranchhand."

KITTY: You're slipping up a lot.

CLEVELAND: Fear keeps tripping up my tongue!

But tell my wife to grab those guns

and let me back inside.

KITTY: I'll tell her.

CLEVELAND: Add a please.

KITTY: I'll say please.

CLEVELAND: And ask her nicely, like you always do.

If you do it

like you do

I will give a gift to you—

golden baubles, and

something better—

KITTY: I'll obey you to the letter!

CLEVELAND: There's a good girl.

KITTY: I will leave now—
if you let me anyhow. (*winks*)

CLEVELAND: Go on now.
Look, here comes my right hand man, he's got a whole parade!

Kitty leaves. Buster comes in with the Chef.

BUSTER: Listen here, chef Luigi, that you keep these cactuses of men in line.

CHEF: Cactuses?

BUSTER: Because they stick onta everything. And if you rip em off, they break into tiny spikery smithereens that stick in your dungarees for days.

CHEF: Oh clam up.

BUSTER: [*Spotting Cleveland*] Oh ho. Should I not do that fancy walk and fancy talk and approach my master as quick as a eight-legged cricket?

CLEVELAND: Greetings, my good man.

BUSTER: Guilty as charged!

CLEVELAND: What is it now?

BUSTER: You are in love! And I am hungry and thirsty!

CLEVELAND: You've marched about elegantly.

BUSTER: Ah, what a day [*walks on*]

CLEVELAND: Whoa there, you jumped-up farmhand king of Nob Hill!

BUSTER: Faugh! Your words enstink my nostrils.

CLEVELAND: What now?

BUSTER: This now!

CLEVELAND: Damn it, stop now!

BUSTER: Quel ennui!

CLEVELAND: Ennui? Now listen here, you allouette, you stand still or I'll pluck that tete.

BUSTER: Mon Dieu!

CLEVELAND: Hold up!

BUSTER: Hold up?! Who are you to hold me up?

CLEVELAND: I'm the boss.

BUSTER: Whose boss?

CLEVELAND: Your boss.

BUSTER: Am I bossed, then?

CLEVELAND: Yes, by me.

BUSTER: I thought I was a stockholder now. Remember? Remember?

CLEVELAND: Hold still! [*grabs him*]

BUSTER: LET GO.

CLEVELAND: You're the boss now...

BUSTER: That's good.

CLEVELAND: My dearest Buster, friend and partner.

BUSTER: That's better.

CLEVELAND: I'm in your debt, sir.

BUSTER: Why would I need a worthless debtor?

CLEVELAND: What now? I'm dying for Marguerite! How soon can you bring me back to life?

BUSTER: How soon can you bring me my dinner?

CLEVELAND: As soon as you bring the cook inside!

BUSTER: Inside in a hurry and cook in a flurry!

I'll be there in a jiff,

make sure dinner's de-lish.

I want every last dainty piled high on my dish.

A real tycoon's feast,

Real American beast,

Go cook me my dinner, you got it?

CHEF: Indeed.

[Exit Chef]

BUSTER: Anything else?

CLEVELAND: I suppose I should mention, Kitty says that Marguerite has two Winchesters, and she's gunning for us.

BUSTER: I know. Let her play Calamity Jane a while. I know these flighty fillies -- they never pull the trigger. Just you go on inside, I'll be right behind.

CLEVELAND: But I'm scared! You go first...

BUSTER: I value my life same as yours *[Push]* After you, I insist.

CLEVELAND: If you say so, then I'll go...with you.

Act IV

Scene 6

IV.i (759-779) - (SONG 6)

Cross-dressing song (Dancing Queen)

GLORIA, KITTY, COCO

Swing those hips, sway and glide, you'll make a beautiful bride.

Be that girl, play your scene, here comes our Marguerite

All you need is a little blush,
 One whiff of this and he'll feel a rush,
 There's no need to be nervous, darling you'll be grand,
 We're gonna catch that man.

Who will know that you're a guy?
 When your rump is stuffed and your heels are high,
 With a bit of practice, you'll have quite the strut,
 Let's see you work that butt,
 This time the grooms get fucked,

Here comes our Marguerite, young and sweet,
 But she's packing heat,
 Marguerite, just the treat, gonna trap that cheat (oh yeah!)
 Swing those hips, sway and glide, now you're a beautiful bride,
 Be that girl, play your scene, here comes our Marguerite.

Scene 7

Cleveland and Gloria enter, mid-argument

CLEVELAND: No, no dear, you should eat here as soon as the wedding feast is ready. As for me, I'll fix myself a fine little sumthin' down on the Farm. You know how the local ruffians are, I simply must accompany the happy couple to the Farm. Marguerite could easily be snatched away! Now go in and enjoy yourselves, but please do send the newlyweds out soon so that we can leave while the sun still lingers in the sky. I shall be back tomorrow, and don't you worry -- I shall have my cake and eat it too!

Exit Gloria

KITTY: Just as I said! The women-folk are kicking the old man out of the house without his supper.

CLEVELAND: What are you doing here?

KITTY: Going about some business.

CLEVELAND: Oh ho.

KITTY: Yes sir.

CLEVELAND: What are you spying on?

KITTY: I'm not spying!

CLEVELAND: Git' along! I won't have you lolly-gagging out here while the whole house is all abustle.

KITTY: I'm gitting!

CLEVELAND: Then kindly proceed, you husteless hussie!

Exit Kitty

Is she gone? Finally! I'll take the first, and speak my mind. It's a fizzing marvel, by Venus' petticoats! When a man is in heat, he needs nothing to eat. Even if he's starving! But, oh oh, here comes the man himself, decked out in his Sunday best -- the man, the legend, my fellow-husband!

BUSTER: Go on there now, fiddler, rosin up your bow and make the streets resound with a jubilee! My nuptials are upon me!

BUSTER and CLEVELAND: [*singing*] Here comes the bride, all dressed in white!
Where are the grooms? They're in the waiting room!! (*singing loudly*)

CLEVELAND: How are you, my life saver?

BUSTER: I'm so hungry, by god, I'm beyond saving.

CLEVELAND: But I, sir, am in love.

BUSTER: But I don't give a damn. While you're feasting on love, my intestines are digesterating themselves.

CLEVELAND: What are they doing in there?? The more I want them to steam ahead, the more they put on the damn brakes.

BUSTER: How 'bout I strike up the wedding hymn again and see if that'll get 'em going!

CLEVELAND: By all means; and I'll carry half the tune, for I intend on carrying off all of the bride!

BUSTER and CLEVELAND: [*singing*] Here comes the bride, all dressed in white!
Where are the grooms? They're in the waiting room!

Why are they there? Because they're taking fucking forever!!

CLEVELAND: Well that's it, I'm done in; I blew a gasket singing that song. And I'm still no closer to the blow-job I'd prefer!

BUSTER: You're a runaway train, you are.

CLEVELAND: What's your reasoning?

BUSTER: There's not a brakeman on earth could decelmerate you! Your boiler's rammed to full with coal.

CLEVELAND: Surely you haven't been stoking me, have you?

BUSTER: Holy enginemen above, no sir! But, wait, is that the door creaking? I think they're coming out!

CLEVELAND: Holy sweet conductor, yes! My train's a-chugging now.

Kitty enters with the veiled "Marguerite"

KITTY: I reckon he's caught a whiff of our Marguerito over yonder. Hike up your petticoats nice and gently now, my blushing bride. You go on'n do this right, you be all lady-like and your husband will be eatin' outta your hand like a Bowery Boy at Tamany Hall. Talk all high and pretty and he'll be wrapped around your sausage-like finger. He'll shower you with gold and you'll mine that gold right out from under him. Day and night you'll bamboozle him – remember that!

BUSTER: I'll tie her to a railroad track if she makes off with even one fleck of my gold.

CLEVELAND: Shut your mouth, you raggedy Andy!

BUSTER: I will not!

CLEVELAND: What's wrong?

BUSTER: That vicious viper's vituperating to my vixen!

CLEVELAND: Are you trying to meddle up my affairs? That's just what they're angling for.

KITTY: Mount up, Buster, saddle this filly and take the reins from us.

BUSTER: Alright then, hand'er over, I reckon it's time to break her in.

SONG 7: WEDDING SONG)

Emcee, as the priest, sings a song over the wedding in dumbshow.

Wedding Song (Blurred Lines)

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| EMCEE (as priest): | Dearly beloved, we're / gathered here today, For some matrimony / to give the bride away. So do you take this man? So do you take this bride? To have, to hold, and to ride? |
| CLEVELAND and BUSTER: | Ok now, Cal was close, tried to domesticate you But you're an animal, baby, it's in your nature |
| GLORIA, COCO, KITTY: | We want to see you tame her, And use your brand to claim her, We know you're gonna make her.... |
| CAL: | You'll never make me, I'm a good girl |
| BUSTER: | I know you want it |
| WOMEN: | We know you want it |
| MEN: | We know you want it |
| CAL: | I'm a good girl! |
| EMCEE: | Now you may kiss her |
| BUSTER: | I'm gonna kiss her |
| GLORIA, COCO, KITTY: | Not if you miss her. |
| ALL: | What a sweet sight! |
| CAL: | The way you grab me Makes me feel nasty |
| GLORIA: | Come on get happy |

CLEVELAND: You may go back inside now.

GLORIA: Please, be delicate with my delicate flower.

BUSTER: Don't worry, I'll treat her real nice.

KITTY: Alright, sayonara.

BUSTER: Toodaloo!

CLEVELAND: Go on, git!

GLORIA: I'm goin, I'm going.

[GLORIA, COCO, and KITTY exit]

CLEVELAND: Has my wife left now?

BUSTER: She alit to the salon, don't get your panties in a bunch.

CLEVELAND: Huzzah! Free at last, free at last, praise the lord, I'm free at last! My kitten mitten, my turtle dove, my dulcet darling.

BUSTER: Watch it you. Remember, she's mine.

CLEVELAND: I know, I know, but I'm claiming my *ius prima noctis* rights. It's *droit de Seigneur* time, Buster.

BUSTER: Juice prime noxious? Draw da senior? Hold this bouquet.

CLEVELAND: No, I'll hold this one. Mighty Venus, you done blessed me when you bestowed this buxom blossom on me.

BUSTER: (*Fondling C*) Oh, what maidenly curves, my little wife. Ow! What in tarnation?

CLEVELAND: What happened?

BUSTER: She stomped on my foot like a wild mustang!

CLEVELAND: Hush you! Her breasts are like silken pillows (*fondling CAL*).

BUSTER: Yes! And what a pretty little – *nip slip*. Ach! Consarnit!?

CLEVELAND: What's wrong?

BUSTER: She pounded me in the chest, it felt more like fisticuffs than the caress of a delicate flower.

CLEVELAND: That's what happens when you treat her like such a churl! She ain't no tight scratch for me, seeing as I'm a perfect gentleman with her.

BUSTER: Bah!

CLEVELAND: What now?

BUSTER: What a bucking bronco this filly is proving to be! She almost threw me off.

CLEVELAND: That just means she wants to be mounted.

BUSTER: Well then, lets get on with this houghmagandy.

CLEVELAND: Come sweetly, my sweet.

They leave toward the Popkin house.

Act V

Scene 8

Enter Gloria, Coco, and Kitty.

COCO: Now that we've seen that most pleasurable hootenanny, let's go witness these fine nuptials. I reckon I've never laughed so much, nor do I think I will ever again.

KITTY: I'd be tickled to know what Cal is up to, that blushing bearded bride with his new husband.

COCO: Not even Mark Twain could have come up with a farce more farcical than this.

GLORIA: I hope the old goat comes running out with his face more battered than after a barroom brawl – he's the most withering wretch in the west. Except of course for the co-conspirator who offered up his boudoir to consummate this horrid affair. Now I want you to take the reins, Kitty, and ridicule whoever comes forth from here.

KITTY: With pleasure, you can count on me.

COCO: Keep an eye on the shenanigans inside.

KITTY: Get behind me, then!

COCO: And then you can speak your mind and hurl those insults.

KITTY: Shush! The doors-a-creaking.

Enter BUSTER

BUSTER: There's nowhere to run, nowhere to hide, nowhere that I can escape the shame that has befallen upon me! Master and I are knee deep in the muck now, and as laughable as two Chinamen sat atop a velocipede. I'm up a new creek now, imbecile that I am. I, who never felt shame, feel ashamed now. Lend me your ears while I tell you this tale – you could do it at follies, and everyone would laugh. That's how comedic a mess I made in there. So. I lead my blushing bride inside, ready to take her to her first ho-down. It was blacker than a coal mine in there, and when the old goat was gone, I said, "Lie down." I laid her down, fluffed her pillows, talked all sweet to her, nice and gentle-like, in order to mine that un-tapped ore before the old coot. But I had to take it a bit slow, since that 40-rod whisky withered my rod. I kept glancing back, in case the old man tried to join in the rodeo. First I pecked her sweetly, and not even with my pecker. But she wouldn't take it and turned her cheek to me, and not the cheek I wanted to see. I GREW more eager and jumped on top, since I was pulling into the station ahead of schedule – after all, I wanted to be the first to sniff that flower. I barred the door so that the old man wouldn't surprise us.

GLORIA: (*To KITTY*) Go on, find out what happened then.

KITTY: Pray tell, where's your wife? Is she having a little trouble walking?

BUSTER: I'm done, I'm spent! It's all hanging out now!

KITTY: Take us through what happened, one step at a time. What's going on inside? How's Marguerite? Did you break her in?

BUSTER: I'm too ashamed to say.

KITTY: Just start at the beginning.

BUSTER: I'm mortified!

KITTY: It's common! Sometimes you have to take one on the chin! Did the train make it into the station or did you have mechanical difficulties?

BUSTER: I can't bear to tell the tale!

KITTY: Just tell us, so that we can learn from your mistakes.

BUSTER: I don't know...

KITTY: Just get on with it.

BUSTER: Well fine then! After I locked the door, I returned to the bed and started to slide my hand down her body. I began at her cheek, then transpositioned my hand downward, first to her neck, then I lowerified a bit more, and that's when I felt...

KITTY: What, her breast?

BUSTER: Woe betide us, no.

KITTY: What then? Her rump?

BUSTER: No, something more elongerated and perilous . It was enormous! I was afraid she was carrying the Winchester down there. I started on looking for it, trying to make sure that it wouldn't go off! I got a hold of what I thunk was the barrel, but it couldn't have been...too warm to be good, old fashioned, American-made steel.

KITTY: Was it a prickly pear?

BUSTER: Nope

KITTY: A cucumber and two radishes?

BUSTER: I don't know, but it wasn't any vegetable. Whatever it was, nothing had ever blighered it – it was so well grown?

KITTY: Now I'm really curious to know what happened. Go on.

BUSTER: I tried to sew my seed. I said, "Marguerite, please, my beauteous bride, why do you shun me? Is it because I desire you so that you won't yield to my touch?" She stayed quiet and covered herself, hiding her sweet womanhood from me. Seeing as the front door was barricaded tight, I asked if I could come in through the rear. I flippered her over and tried to hold her down with my elbows. I rose for my grand entrance and...

COCO: What a lovely story...

BUSTER: I leaned in for a kiss, but it felt like I was smooching a burlap sack. I pulled back, and she bucked me off like a bronco. Off the bed I tumble, headfirst, and she's on me, pummeling my face. I ran out of the room as swift and silent as a polecat...the old man didn't see me, and now I reckon he'll be drinking from the same trough.

GLORIA: As well he should be. Now didn't we lead you a merry dance?

BUSTER: Yes, ma'am, and well-deserved it were. Wait, what was that sound, she isn't following me, is she?

CLEVELAND enters

CLEVELAND: It burns! It burns! (*Pause*) My shame burns! What will I tell my wife? How can I look her in the eye? My manhood... My PRIDE is destroyed! All my misdeeds are hanging out. I'm as good as dead. I'm short of breath, as if a hand is tightening around my – ahem – column. How can I possibly explain THIS to my wife. Forced out, and naked as a jaybird! All I hankered after was one night of passion, breaking down walls, spelunking! But that wedding was a sham! My wife has cottoned on, after all, and no wonder -- I haven't been this hopped up in years! It's probably best for me if I just come clean now. I'll just bend over and take my spanking. (*To audience*) Is there anyone out there willing to be my deputy and face this showdown with me? Probably not – maybe I should skedaddle, like an injin running from the sheriff. I'm taking a flogging if I stay, and even though I deserve it, I'm going to hightail it out of this town.

Enter Cal

CAL: Yoo hoo! Hey cowboy! Stick-em up!

CLEVELAND: Shit! She, I mean he, saw me! I'll pretend I didn't hear her, ah, him!

CAL: Where are you going you foppish philanderer? Didn't you want another ride? You can take the sodomy train into the station this time! Come back to the boudoir! If you stay out here, you're finished. If you come back in, I promise I'll take real good care of this stick of yours.

CLEVELAND: I'm a goner! He'll club little lion like Hercules! I have to run away, that crotch clobberer is after me!

GLORIA: Hello Darling.

CLEVELAND: Egad, now my wife is here! I'm stuck between a rock and a hard place with no recourse to escape. On one side, I've got a wolf in sheep's clothing and on the other side, a pack of hungry bitches. Only this time, the wolf holds the stick. I think I'll take my chances with the bitches.

COCO: How are you, two-timer?

GLORIA: My dear husband, where are you coming from in this getup? What happened to your walking stick and britches?

KITTY: He lost them *in flagrante delicto*...fornicating with 'Marguerite' here.

CLEVELAND: I'm done for!

CAL: Lover boy! Come back to bed with your Marguerite!

CLEVELAND: Go drown yourself in the bay.

CAL: Don't you love me?

GLORIA: Tell it to me true, what happened to your britches?

CLEVELAND: Opium fiends!

GLORIA: Opium fiends?

CLEVELAND: Opium fiends.

COCO: He's jibber-jabbering. Everyone knows that the city's been awaiting a shipment for months and is drier than the Mohave.

CLEVELAND: Curses, she's right! But still... opium fiends!

GLORIA: Seriously, opium fiends? It's simply not possible. You're quaking in your boots – you must be afraid.

CLEVELAND: Me? Impossible.

GLORIA: Well, you look sickly and pale, did you catch the clap during your tryst? Do you take me for a fool? Congratulations, you pathetic old coot. Here is your darling Marguerite-O.

Unveils Cal

CLEVELAND: I just wanted one night with a beautiful young girl, not a dried up raisin in the sun like you! But when I glimpsed her true "womanhood," I realized she was no woman at all, no maid, that I couldn't plough her fertile fields... she wields the plough and sews the seeds.

BUSTER: I won't responsibilitate for this. This buffoon's lustifying antics entangled me in a

shameful plot.

CLEVELAND: Shut your sauce-box, will you?

BUSTER: I will not! You begged me to wed Marguerite so that you could do all the bedding.

CLEVELAND: Surely I would never!

BUSTER: No, it was Hector of Troy, Tamer of Horses, greatest swordsman of the Trojans.

CLEVELAND: He wouldn't abide such mischief. You don't think I did these things to you, do you?

GLORIA: You even have to ask?

CLEVELAND: If I did them, I did wrong.

GLORIA: If you don't remember, I'm happy to refresh your memory.

CLEVELAND: No, that's quite unnecessary. Beloved wife, I beseech you, grant me forgiveness! Coco, please ask Gloria for her forgiveness. My love, if I ever mount Marguerite again -- hell, if I so much as try to -- you can chain me up and spank me with rods.

COCO: You should accede to his wishes and grant him clemency.

GLORIA: I'll submit to this request. Now, don't think I'm making this here promise for your benefit. I'll acquiesce for their sakes, since this tale has gone on for too long.

CLEVELAND: You're not angry?

GLORIA: No, not angry.

CLEVELAND: And I can hold you to your word?

GLORIA: You may.

CLEVELAND: There's no man in the Bay with a more forgiving wife than I!

GLORIA: Go on now, give him back his walking stick and britches.

CAL: Take them if you wish. I've gotten the short end of the stick -- I married two men, but neither allowed me to perform my wifely duty.

V.v (1012-18) - SONG 8 - Big Closing Number - EVERYBODY SINGS!

ALL (*sung*):

THIS SHOW'S BEEN GOING ON FOREVER,
BUT NOW OUR REVEL'S NEAR ITS END.
GET UP AND PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER,
COME ON APPLAUD US LIKE A FRIEND.

(*short dance break*)

WOMEN (*sung*):

WE GUARANTEE A HAPPY ENDING,
TO EVERY CLAPPER IN THE CROWD.

MEN (*sung*):

SO IF YOU WANT THE SAPPY WEDDING,
COME ON APPLAUD US LONG AND LOUD.

(*dance break. Spoken:*)

GLORIA: You know, it's high time Marguerite was married. It's eighteen years to the day since we found her in that train station.

COLLIS: In a train station?

COCO: Eighteen years ago today?

GLORIA: Yes, that's right.

COLLIS: Oh my god!

COCO: Marguerite isn't Marguerite, she's our long lost daughter Casina!

ALL: Oh, Casina!

GLORIA: You mean she's *wealthy*!? Marguerite! Come out! We hid her in the audience. There she is!

(*The unsuspecting Marguerite is pulled out of the audience*)

COCO: My darling!

CLEVELAND: But if she's their daughter...

GLORIA: She can marry Junior after all!

KITTY: Look, Cleveland Junior is back from his travels as well!

(The unsuspecting Cleveland Junior is pulled out of the audience)

GLORIA: We should hold the wedding right now!

(Everyone gets into position)

EMCEE: Do you, Cleveland Junior—

GLORIA: He said "I do," I heard it!

EMCEE: And do you, Marguerite—

COCO: She said it too, oh happy days!

CLEVELAND: Come on everyone, let's dance!

(They dance, while singing:)

ALL:

COME ON APPLAUD US

COME ON APPLAUD US

COME ON FOR PLAUTUS!

COME ON APPLAUD US LONG AND LOUD!